



EPA Region 6 – ITC Response General Hotwash

What role did you mostly perform in the response?

Monitoring oil spill response contractor from motor boat on the Ship Channel.

What was the approximate length of time that you were involved in this response?

Eight days.

REPEAT QUESTIONS AS NEEDED

When answering please take into consideration some of the following topics:

- a) Plans – IAPs, Health and Safety, SOPs, Mobilization/De-mobilization
- b) Command/Control – Roles/Responsibilities, Coordination w/ partners, line of command, tactics
- c) Process – Communication, Documentation, Logistics, Finance, Information Flow
- d) Level of Response – Appropriate size, Correct Personnel, Deliverables

1) What worked well?

From what I could tell in my limited involvement in this response there was more than adequate response assets on the scene.

Comms worked well between all parties involved.

2) What is an area of concern?

a) Short description of the problem

I think the ICS structure did not operate as it should have. Although I was only present for 8 morning Ops meetings, every morning during that meeting there was too much uncertainty and tactics for the day. Activities planned during the evening Planning meetings were often modified or revised spontaneously at the Ops meeting the following morning. This is not how ICS is designed to work. The time to discuss the merits of daily tactics is at the Planning meeting, set your prospective plans and then issue directives at the Ops meeting. Another disturbing area of concern was the apparent lack of tactical coordination with Port Authority management. Many times during the 8 days I was monitoring contractors large cargo ships arrived and departed areas

where there was on-going oil collection activities. This was somewhat disruptive to the response because recovery teams had to redeploy as ships arrived and departed. And this unplanned movement added a danger factor as well. I understand and recognize the needs of commerce, especially when it involves essential cargo such as oil, but I think there should have been better coordination between the Command General Staff, the Planning Chief, and the Port Authority.

I also think that although there were hundreds of boats and personnel involved in this response, there was not enough supervision of these assets. On numerous instances I observed boats and dozens of contractor personnel pulled up on a shoreline or tied to a dock doing nothing. There's always a certain amount of 'inadvertent' waste occurring, but if there was better personnel management I think a considerable amount of money and resources could have been saved.

b) What effect does this problem have on EPA R6 operations? (For example: increases costs, delays or prevents accomplishment of mission, other effects)

Clearly it increases SOMEONE'S costs, but since this was an RP-lead response, the costs are borne by the RP and not EPA. I don't know enough about R-6 to say if this response had any deleterious or distracting effects on the Region.

c) Recommendations to address the area of concern or make the response better?

Even though this was a Coast Guard lead response in terms of oversight, I would have expected EPA to have had a more assertive role in the overall response. If this response was in EPA jurisdiction, and if I was the lead OSC, I would have given serious thought to federalizing this response.

For Questions, please contact Matt Loesel 202-578-2125 or Loesel.matthew@epa.gov

Please return completed form to loesel.matthew. In addition, if you would like to give verbal feedback you may call Matt Loesel at 214-738-0674.